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THE MONTHLY GULL BULLETIN

Volume 54 Berkeley, California July-August 1972 Number 7-8

COVEL'S CONSERVATION CORNER

People Power has again manifested itself in Oakland, in a fast-growing concern for the future environment of the Oakland Hills. Citizens' attendance en masse and barrages of petitions persuaded the Oakland City Council to request the State Division of Highways to abandon the proposed Shepard Canyon Freeway. Next, the Council dropped plans to widen scenic Skyline Boulevard, and has formed a special staff and citizen committee to rush a cost-benefit study of the proposed "Mountain Village" subdivision in the East Oakland hills. This development would remove 60 vertical feet of the ridgetop between Merritt College hill campus and Oak Knoll Naval Hospital, provide 2183 living units and create a dammed lake in the now-natural canyon. The contractors did propose giving the city a school site and leaving portions of their lands in open space.

The Citizens Advisory Group on San Leandro Bay, after months of deliberations and field studies, has published its 80-page report. This includes extensive figures and descriptions of the wildlife of the Bay from bottom-dwellers to birds, recreational and educational uses, commercial uses, their impact, development plans, and excellent maps and aerial photographs. The Port of Oakland provided meeting facilities for the group and assembled and printed the report. We again compliment Elsie Roemer of GGAS who labored untold hours in assembling the the natural resource and wildlife experts who served on the committee, leading field trips and "representing the birds." We hope this study will result in preservation of the meager natural marsh and shoreline areas surviving along San Leandro Bay.

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area received House hearings on May 11-12, for bills HR 13060 (Administration); HR 10220 (Cong. Mailliard); HR 9498 (Cong. Burton). Several witnesses from the Bay Area spoke, and Secretary of the Interior Rogers CB Morton gave strong administration support. The Administration proposal includes only a part of Olema Valley. At time of writing (May 30), San Francisco Supervisors and the National Park Service were working on a plan to include Ocean Beach, Lincoln Park and he Marina and Aquatic parks. Supporters were urging the Senate to take up hearings on these bills. When you read this in the *Gull* Mrs. Amy Meyer (752-2777) at the GGNRA organization office will inform you of what help is currently needed.

Friends of the Farallones (a somewhat nebulous but significant group title conceived by your columnist) should now lend their voices and written testimonials to a proposal to create an Ocean Islands Wildlife Refuge Wilderness. This would give permanent security to some 56 offshore islands and rocks with bird colonies, including the Three Arch Rock Refuge set aside by Pres. Theodore Roosevelt in 1907. Such statements or requests for brochures on this proposal may be written to the Regional Director, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, P.O. Box 3737, Portland, Oregon 97208.

Other issues and crises which must receive briefer mention: The Sierra Club, Save San Francisco Bay Assoc., and Mr. Kent Dedrick have sued Leslie Salt Company over recent diking, in preparation for a subdivision, on Bair Island. This island near Redwood City supports a breeding heron colony of four species and should be included in the long-postponed South Bay wildlife refuge.

Senator Peter Behr's Wildlife Protection Act, SB 1177, was expected to clear Senate committees early in June. Watch for its progress. It would ban use of the 1080 poison, among other measures.

—PAUL COVEL, *Conservation Chairman.*

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON NATURE TRAINING

The Golden Gate Center will be closed from July 1 until after the first week of September due to the necessity of relocating the office. For the first time however, Golden Gate Audubon Nature Training will offer courses this year during the summer. The courses scheduled are (1) "Adventures in Urban Ecology for City Dwellers," (2) "Adventures in Urban Ecology for Pre-School Teachers," and (3) "Adventures in Urban Ecology for Youth Group Leaders." All of the courses are designed to better one's enjoyment of nature and open eyes and ears to the abundance of nature that surround us even within city limits. For details on places, dates, fees, and teachers, write to Audubon Nature Training, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Berkeley, Ca. 94709 (*mail will be forwarded*). Please specify the course of interest by number (see above).

TWO PELAGIC TRIPS SCHEDULED

On Sunday, August 20, Golden Gate Audubon Society will have a boat trip for hardy seafarers interested in studying migrating sea birds. Two boats are scheduled to leave from Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey at **9 A.M.** Return time is between 3 and 4 P.M. Fare will be $10.00 per person, payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society. Please send check with *stamped, self-addressed envelope* to Peter White, 24900 Santa Clara Avenue Apt. 47, Hayward, Ca. 94544. Names and addresses of guests must be included. Details on where to meet will be sent with the acknowledgment. Reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis, and will close when the boat is filled.

The other trip is scheduled for Saturday, September 23; there will be three boats. Details will be announced in the September *GULL.*

FIELD TRIPS FOR JULY

Saturday, July 8—A caravan trip down the South Peninsula coast, covering a variety of habitats. We should see Grasshopper Sparrows, Marbled Murrelets, and Black Swifts. Meet at **9 A.M.** at the San Gregorio Beach State Park on Highway 1, approximately 12 miles south of Half Moon Bay. Bring lunch. Leader, Ted Chandik (851-0254).

Don't forget the last Wednesday of every month. Meet at the Academy of Sciences at **9 A.M.** Choose your own leader and destination.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Red-necked Grebe, May 7, Bodega Bay—DR.

Sooty Shearwaters, "a large group observed in the Golden Gate every evening from April 30 through May 6, May 10, 11"—EL; also near Pacifica in May—RH, DM.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron, May 28, returned for 5th consecutive year to Chicken Point, San Rafael—AB.

Blue-winged Teal, May 5, Angwin—DR.

European Widgeon, March 28, Alameda South Shore—MZ.

Osprey, May 27, flying over Russian River, near Asti—RJ, CJ.

Peregrine Falcon, May 9, Limantour Spit—DM.

180 *Whimbrels,* May 9, Limantour Spit—DM.

100 *Knots,* April 2, Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, and 190 on April 29, same place—PW, CS.

Pygmy Owl calling in morning, May 6, 7, Pinnacles Nat. Mon.—BP, SSW.

Spotted Owl, May 12, near Crane Flat, Yosemite Park—SB.

2*Black Swifts,* May 27 at Rodeo Lagoon—VDaC.

Vaux's Swift, May 5, near Sunol Park—BP.

Black-chinned Hummingbird male, May 5, Pinnacles Nat. Mon.—BP, SSW.

Calliope Hummingbird, May 4, Angwin—DR; May 17, Mt Diablo —LC *et al.*

Hammond's Flycatcher, May 14, abundant (at least 15 singing), Bridalveil Campground, Yosemite—VR, SB.

Bell's Vireo, May 6, 7, Pinnacles Nat. Mon.—BP, SSW.

Hermit Warbler singing in full view, May 9, near Blue Oak Picnic Area, Mt. Diablo—LC, BP *et. al.;* one male, May 12, Tilden Park—VR.

MacGillivray's Warbler, May 27, Strawberry Canyon, Berkeley, same spot as on April 29—VR.

Hooded Orioles, pair, May 7, 11, 12, on flowering eucalyptus in San Francisco garden—EL.

Western Tanagers reported by many observers in May in parks and cities in the Bay Area.

Blue Grosbeaks, pair, May 15, near Sacramento River—VS, IT, VH; a male May 26, Woodland sugar ponds—JR.

Gray-crowned Rosy Finches, May 28, ten at Sonora Pass summit—VR, KA.

Lawrence's Goldfinches, May 12, four in Tilden Park—VR, DG, NJ; May 17, pair, Briones Reg. Park—SW; May 19, three in Briones Park; May 21, pair in Orinda garden—GA. This has been a good Lawrence Goldfinch season in the Bay Area.

Grasshopper Sparrow, mid-May, Las Trampas Reg. Park—LC, JM, JR, VH; May 30, Wildcat Canyon, Richmond—JM, BP *et. al.*

Black-chinned Sparrow, May 19, singing in full view on the Peak Trail above Laurel Canyon, Tilden Park—JM; May 30, same area, but closer to Laurel Canyon fire road—MZ, AP; May 21, near Grizzly Peak Blvd. about one mile south of Centennial Drive. He responded to a tape recording of his own voice—PW. We usually have to go to Mt. Diablo for this species. One heard in Rossmoor hills June 10—LC.

A late *Golden-crowned Sparrow* adult, May 12, Tilden Park—VR.

Observers: Kathy Alderson, Garth Alton, Steve Bailey, Aubrey Burns, Larry Curl, Val DaCosta, Doug Greenberg, Ray Higgs, Ned Johnson, Richard and Claire Johnson, Elizabeth Land, Diann MacRae, Joe Morlan, Adah Pride, Bill Pursell, Van Remsen, Jean Richmond, Don Roberson, Virginia Sherwood, Clarence Smith, Inez Troxell, Peter Ward, S. S. Whitehead, Steve Whitney, Margaret Zeff.

—VI HOMEM, *Observations Chairman* (339-1886).

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Thirty-two Audubonites turned out early enough for the trip to Jack London Ranch on May 13 to hear the morning chorus of bird songs and to distinguish one from the other. Of particular interest was that of the Yellow-breasted Chat, a bird that every member of the group got to see as well as hear. The bird's antics gave everyone something to remember until the next time. Also seen were Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, Western Wood Pewee, Western Flycatcher, and Ashthroated Flycatcher. Additional birds seen by others were Western Bluebird and Lazuli Buntings.—Mrs. Valeria DaCosta, leader.

A rare treat for the folks who stayed to the end of the May 21 trip to Mt. Diablo was the flushing of a Poor-will. Almost everyone got a good look at the bird before it dropped from sight. This observation capped a trip for which the birds were low in number but high in quality. Also seen were Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Olive-sided and Ash-throated Flycatchers, Warbling Vireos, and Lazuli Buntings. Several female hummingbirds gave everyone something to speculate about, and the usual oak-and-chaparral birds were also present.—Ray Higgs, Leader.

Thirty-four eager birders turned out on April 15 for the Presidio bird walk and were rewarded by a number of cooperative and colorful species. The resident Hooded Orioles were busy about their nest tree, a fan-leaf palm. This is at least their fourth year of nesting in this vicinity. Also seen were Mockingbird, Pine Siskin, Pygmy Nuthatch, Chickadee, Cedar Waxwing, Song Sparrow, and other regulars.—Mary Louise Rosegay, Leader.

Highlights of a Pelagic Trip out of Bodega Bay. A trip sponsored by the Redwood Region Ornithological Society, May 7, produced, among the many shearwaters, a number of Fulmars. One Fulmar was netted and brought on board for a closer study of its peculiar tubenosed bill, and then released. There were 29 Black-footed Albatrosses, 21 of which alighted on the water just off the stern, close enough to scoop one up on deck for measurements. Wingspread: 7 feet! Among the marine mammals there were, in addition to sea lions, several northern fur seals, a school of Dall porpoises, and excellent views of Killer Whales.

—MRS. VALERIA DaCOSTA.

WATER BIRDS OF OAKLAND'S LAKE MERRITT

Now available from the Rotary Natural Science Center, Lakeside Park, Oakland, is a new and welcome brochure on the water birds that make Lake Merritt their home, either as all-year residents or as winter visitors. Written by our own Paul Covel, naturalist there, and illustrated by Rex Burress, the brochure includes interesting historical information about the United States' oldest wildlife refuge; notes on the interpretive programs conducted there; a chart indicating the relative abundance of the ducks, geese, swans, gulls and terns, and various other bird visitors that can be seen there at different seasons; plus a detailed map showing the on-site and nearby recreational and educational facilities available to the public.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gifts of remembrance were made to *Audubon Canyon Ranch:*

In Memory of:	*Gift of:*
Myra Browne	Neva Snell, Mrs. Janet Nickelsburg, Marvin & Frances Ellen Fallgatter, Rose Housepian, and Florence Plymell
Mrs. Anna Gonzales	Linda Krause
Mr. Warren Harrold	Mrs. Beverly Keimer
Mrs. Alice Bepler O'Brien, M.D.	Virginia Orton
Blanche Vranna	Nell Mary Ryan

A gift of remembrance was made to *GGAS Nature Training:*

In Memory of:	*Gift of:*
Mr. Morton F. Hoffman	Marjorie, Stuart, & David Hoffman

—DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary and Memorial Fund Chairman*, 854 Longridge Road, Oakland 94610 (415-6267).

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Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL* Monthly meetings second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership,—Local & National $12 per year, (individual); $15 (family); includes *AUDUBON MAGAZINE* and *THE GULL*. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately $2 per year. High school & college student membership $6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.